Dear, Dear Joe,

1/4/90

If I did not know you to be explicit and honest, I'd think from your letter of the first that you'd suffered our weather down there, had a bellyache, been shot again or lost that suit!

But I do not resent your determination, your persistence, and I do dispute that you are a liar because you did not accompany your offer with cash.

You have ignored all I have written to explain why I've not dropped everything else to write my memoires and I think not one thing I said is a lie. And I am not a liar because I did not promise to write those memoires.

Perhaps some of the lies of the great in Israel Shenker's article may apply to me. It is never easy to be impartial about ones self. But I do quote back to you his quotation of Samuel Johnson, which happens to be one of the reasons I did give you for my reluctance to promise: "What we think of importance we wish to do well." With this I do agree and because I do not recall whether I went into it, I now do. In the hope you will not consider it immodest.

I regard the assassination of President Kennedy as one of the turning points in modern history. I regard the failures of the government in pretending the investigations never made or intended as a great subversion. I believe also that I am the one who first published absolutely solid criticisms and exposures and until beset with illnesses continued to do so. There are several excellent but quite limited books that long since have disappeared but I continue to make mine available. While I make no claim to ownership of the subject matter, - do claim to be the author of just about all that is factual that has been brought to light.

I am not aware on any significant error in any of my books and I am certain there is none in the multitudinous affidavits that also record this history in my many FOIA lawsuits and appeals. Those who were challenged by them, in the broadest sense the government, were not able to lay a finger on them. Because I understood that in these attestations I was writing part of this history, I elected the dangerous course of making myself subject to severe punishment if I erred, to charges of perjury by those I sued, the ones who make and prosecute such charges. I opted this course to subject what I said to the most careful, even vindictive scrutiny. I am not boasting and I knew what I was doing.

As of now, in all I've done, which I repeat is virtually all that analyses, condemns and exposes errant officialdom on all levels, I have made no significant error and only a few insignificant errors. In this I am saying that - have written a solid, accurate and dependable history, for the present and for the future. I think it is an important history and I want it to exist without factual criticism of it, without any justifiable undermining of it, at least its content, and without any legitimate basis for disputing it.

This is perhaps the major reason I have not continued writing more books once I felt

that I now am not up to good and dependable and thorough writing. There are other reasons that I have given you. One is my unwillingness to write this kind of work off the top of the head when I am not physically up to the work of retrieving the records on which I would be depending in this kind of writing.

I am not happy with my limitations but I also do not pretend they do not exist. They are real and they, not my age, keep me weary. Not that age could not contribute to this. Aside from my apprehension about the quality of my writing, as a practical matter access to these records in the basement is for practical purposes denied me because I'd require not an occasional record but a great quantity of them. In this I refer to writing in the broadest sense. It applies much less to what you have in mind. But what you have in mind requires regular access to several file cabinets of court records, all in the basement, to the government's filings and to mine, quite a few of which are several hundred pages long, with many attachments.

I am not being frivolous. I can't stand for any length of time to search those file drawers and to return files to them, I can't use the stairs many times a day and we are not talking about just sitting and writing, as one writes essays or novels.

I can and I do see value in what you have in mind, do not regard it as ego-tripping. Although I did not think of it myself, I do not deprecate its value. Not thinking it worthwhile is not a factor.

I do make worthwhile use of some of the time that you would like me to spend on that book, I do in other ways seeks to accomplish some of what you have in mind and I think I succeed in it, and on the chance that I may feel up to it or that in the future it may interest others, I am spending time getting more on paper relating to it that can be used by others. Or by me, for that matter. Although I can't sit down and organize such an enormity of material, I am doing this in a way that while making an effort at encompassing the entire history of the subject that is not in my earlier writing also builds to and lays a foundation for that which interests you most. And I will get to that. How soon depends on the other things that take time. I began responding to yesterday's mail only a few minutes after three this morning. Most of yesterday was taken up with assisting a history professor friend with precisely the kind of thing you have in mind and he will publish and with a young friend's visit in which we did discuss his future work based on mine. He has done an excellent TV documentary, seen by more people than read a book, largely on my earliest work, he is presently engaged in an unrelated but not dissimilar documentary and he has plans we discussed for the future.

But with the weariness of recent days the probability that I will use what I am getting on paper does not appear to be high. If this changes and I feel able, I then will have to decide whether that is better than the alternatives I have, other books, But I do love you for your persistence and your intentions. Best to you all,

Harold